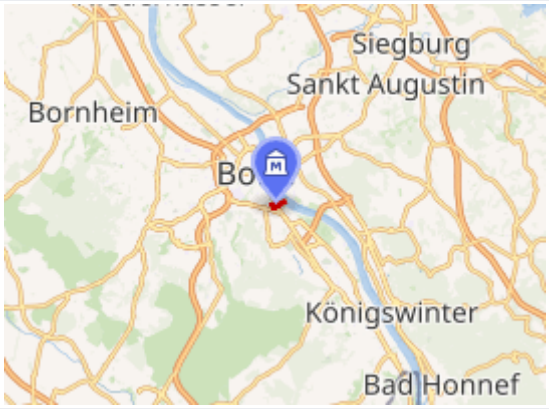
Coordinates: 50°43′19″N 7°06′49″E

Museum Koenig

The **Alexander Koenig Research Museum** (German: *Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig*, abbreviated ZFMK) is a natural history museum and zoological research institution in Bonn, Germany. The museum is named after Alexander Koenig, who donated his collection of specimens to the institution. The museum was opened in 1934 and is affiliated with the Leibniz Association.

On September 1, 1948, the museum saw the opening of the Parlamentarischer Rat, the organ to create the German constitution. The actual proceedings happened in the nearby Pädagogische Akademie, the later Bundeshaus.

Zoologische Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig



Established	May 13, 1934
Location	Adenauerallee 160 Bonn, Germany
Type	Natural History
Visitors	123,000 (2005)[1]
Director	Wolfgang Wägele
Website	www.zfmk.de/en (https://www.zfmk.de/en)

Contents

History
Exhibitions
Museum Complex
See also
References
External links

History

The museum in 1962.

The museum was founded by the private scholar Alexander Koenig (1858–1940) as a private institute for zoological research and public education. Alexander Koenig, who was born in 1858 as the son of the wealthy merchant Leopold Koenig, began to collect birds and mammals as a boy. He later studied zoology and received a doctorate in natural history in 1884. In the following years he organized and funded several expeditions to the Arctic and Africa and greatly expanded his private collection of specimens.

After his father died in 1903, Alexander Koenig planned a natural history museum to present his private collection to the public. On September 3, 1912, the foundation stone to the new Museum Alexander Koenig was laid. After the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the uncompleted building was confiscated and used as a military hospital and later, until 1923, as barracks by the French occupying forces. Alexander Koenig, who had lost most of his fortune in the aftermath of the war, donated the museum and his private collection to the German government in 1929. The museum finally opened its doors to the public on May 13, 1934.[2]

After World War II the museum building, which was left largely intact by the war, was the only representative and large assembly hall available in Bonn, now capital of West Germany. This was the reason why the museum was used by the Parlamentarischer Rat (English: *parliamentary council*), for its opening session on September 1, 1948. At this time plans were made to use the museum building as the Chancellor's Office (German: *Bundeskanzleramt*), but it was eventually only used for two months by the new chancellor Konrad Adenauer in 1949.[3][4]

Commemorating plaque for the opening session of the Parlamentarischer Rat, installed in 1978

Exhibitions

The museum defines its mission as "researching and explaining the diversity of species of Earth". The main exhibition is titled "Unser blauer Planet - Leben im Netzwerk" (Our blue planet - living in a network). It shows complex ecological systems through dioramas of the African Savannah, a tropical rain forests, the polar regions, deserts and Central Europe.[5]

Restored skeleton of Leonerasaurus, photographed at the Museum Koenig during the stay of the special exhibition "DINOSAURIER - Giganten Argentiniens" in 2009

Aside from the permanent exhibition the museum houses special exhibitions regularly.

Museum Complex

Today the Museum Koenig is housed in a complex of several buildings dating from different times and serving different purposes. The building complex includes the main building, the Villa, the Private Museum and the Class M. Naumann Building.

The main building of the Museum Koenig houses the public exhibition and features a large central hall crowned by a glass roof. The building was designed by Gustav Holland, who probably modeled the Museum Koenig after the Museum of Natural History in Berlin. Construction began in 1912, but the museum was not opened until 1934 due to World War I.

Central hall

The Villa is the oldest part of the Museum Koenig and houses the vertebrate department. The building was built in 1860. Leopold Koenig, father of Alexander Koenig purchased the building in 1873. He donated the house to his son in 1884 after Alexander Koenig received his doctoral degree and married Margarethe Westphal. Alexander Koenig used the Villa as his private residence and to house his bird collections. The building was largely destroyed in World War II and rebuild in a simplified manner in 1949.

The Private Museum is an annex to the Villa, and was built to house the growing private collection of Alexander Koenig. Construction began in 1898 and was completed in 1900. The architect was Otto Penner.

The Clas M. Naumann Building is a modern annex to the main building and was opened in 2006. The building is named after Clas Michael Naumann, professor of zoology at the University of Bonn and former director of the museum. The building houses the arthropod collection, the library and laboratories.[6]

See also

- Hans Edmund Wolters — head of Department of Ornithology, 1973–1980

References

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External links

- Official website (https://www.zfmk.de/en)

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